

What is claimed is:

1 1. An image combining and outputting apparatus that combines  
2 a plurality of original images and outputs a combined image,  
3 comprising:

4 a balance adjusting unit for adjusting balance between  
5 a plurality of original images that are to be combined;  
6 and

7 an image combining unit for combining the plurality  
8 of original images after the balance has been adjusted by  
9 the balance adjusting unit,

10 the balance adjusting unit including:

11 an attribute information obtaining unit for obtaining  
12 attribute information that has been added to image data  
13 of a fixed image, the fixed image being an original image,  
14 out of the plurality of original images, whose size is not  
15 to be adjusted by the balance adjusting unit;

16 a size information obtaining unit for obtaining size  
17 information showing an original size of at least one  
18 adjustable image, an adjustable image being an original  
19 image in the plurality of original images whose size is  
20 to be adjusted by the balance adjusting unit; and

21 a size adjusting unit for adjusting the size of at  
22 least one adjustable image, based on the attribute  
23 information obtained by the attribute information obtaining  
24 unit and the size information obtained by the size  
25 information obtaining unit.

1 2. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 1,

3 wherein the attribute information shows a  
4 post-adjustment size to be used for the adjustable images,  
5 and the size adjusting unit makes the sizes of the at least  
6 one adjustable image approximately equal to the  
7 post-adjustment size shown by the attribute information.

1 3. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 2, further comprising

3 a selection input receiving unit for receiving a user  
4 selection of an image combining parameter that is assigned  
5 in advance to each adjustable image,

6 wherein the attribute information includes a plurality  
7 of pairs, each pair showing one setting of the image combining  
8 parameter and a corresponding post-adjustment size, and  
9 the size adjusting unit makes the sizes of the at least  
10 one adjustable image approximately equal to the  
11 post-adjustment size corresponding to the selected image  
12 combining parameter selected by the user for each adjustable  
13 image.

1 4. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 3,

3 wherein the attribute information includes at least  
4 one arrangement position at which an original image is to  
5 be positioned during image combining, each arrangement

6 position being associated with a different setting of the  
7 image combining parameter.

1 5. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 2,

3 wherein the attribute information includes  
4 information showing an arrangement position into which an  
5 original image is to be positioned during image combining.

1 6. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 1, further comprising:

3 an amendment indication input receiving unit which  
4 receives an indication showing that at least one of a size  
5 and a position of at least one original image are to be  
6 amended within a combined image;

7 wherein when the amendment indication input receiving  
8 unit has received an indication showing that a size of at  
9 least one original image is to be adjusted, the balance  
10 adjusting unit adjusts the sizes of the at least one original  
11 image in accordance with the indication, and

12 when the amendment indication input receiving unit  
13 has received an indication showing that a position of at  
14 least one original image is to be adjusted, the image  
15 combining unit adjusts the positions of the at least one  
16 original image in accordance with the indication.

1 7. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 1,

3 wherein the plurality of original images to be combined  
4 consist of a background image whose size is not to be adjusted  
5 and an input image whose size is changed as necessary in  
6 accordance with the background image.

1 8. An image combining and outputting apparatus, comprising:  
2 an image combining means for combining a first image  
3 and a second image;

4 an attribute information obtaining means for obtaining  
5 attribute information that is appended to the first image;

6 a size information obtaining unit for obtaining size  
7 information that is appended to the second image; and

8 a size adjusting means for adjusting the size of the  
9 second image based on the attribute information and the  
10 size information when the image combining means performs  
11 image combining.

1 9. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 8,

3 wherein the attribute information includes second size  
4 information showing a post-adjustment size for the second  
5 image,

6 the size adjusting means magnifying or reducing the  
7 second image to make the size of the second image  
8 approximately equal to the post-adjustment size shown by

9 the second size information.

1 10. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 9, further comprising  
3 an operation unit for indicating an image type of the  
4 second image,  
5 the second size information being changed in  
6 accordance with the image type of the second image indicated  
7 by the operation unit.

1 11. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 8,  
3 wherein the attribute information includes position  
4 information showing a position for arranging the second  
5 image during the image combining,  
6 the image combining means arranging the second image  
7 at the position shown by the second size information when  
8 combining the first image and the second image.

1 12. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 8, further comprising:  
3 a mode setting means for setting a user mode where  
4 the size of the second image is changed according to a user  
5 operation; and  
6 a changing means for stopping, when the user mode has  
7 been set, the size adjusting means from adjusting the size  
8 of the second image and for changing the size of the second

9 image in accordance with the user operation.

1 13. An image combining and outputting apparatus according  
2 to Claim 8, further comprising:

3 an outline extracting means for extracting an outline  
4 in the second image; and

5 a display device for displaying the outline extracted  
6 from the second image together with the first image.

1 14. An image combining method for combining a first image  
2 and a second image, comprising:

3 an attribute information obtaining step for obtaining  
4 attribute information that is appended to the first image:

5 a size information obtaining step for obtaining size  
6 information that is appended to the second image;

7 a size adjusting step for adjusting the size of the  
8 second image based on the attribute information and the  
9 size information; and

10 an image combining step for combining the first image  
11 with the second image whose size has been automatically  
12 adjusted in the size adjusting step.

1 15. An image combining method in accordance with Claim 14,

2 wherein the attribute information includes second size  
3 information showing a post-adjustment size for the second  
4 image,

5 the size adjusting step magnifying or reducing the

- 6 second image to make the size of the second image  
7 approximately equal to the post-adjustment size shown by  
8 the second size information.

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